



PRESS RELEASE

NACFOR SUMMIT LAKE TENURE HARVESTING PLANS

[October 15, 2025, Nakusp]; The Nakusp and Area Community Forest (NACFOR) recently posted harvesting plans for its Summit Lake tenure area, on the Ministry of Forests Forest Operations Map (FOM) for public review and comment period ending August 31, 2025. The FOM is an online platform which gives the public and stakeholders the opportunity to review and comment on the harvesting plans.

NACFOR received several comments on the FOM portal, most pertaining to Western Toad populations in Summit Lake. Additional comments have also been sent to NACFOR's information email following a press release from the Valhalla Wilderness Society that included inaccurate information about the planned harvesting. NACFOR management will be reviewing each comment and addressing them as needed.

NACFOR has identified development areas within its Summit Lake tenure that aim to minimize the impact on terrestrial western toad habitat and hibernacula. Harvesting is planned for winter 2026/27 (which is outside of the western toad migration and breeding season) and will take place on frozen ground and a snowpack to reduce impacts to hibernating toads. Contrary to information that has recently been posted online, no clearcuts are being proposed. The blocks have been laid out for partial cut harvest with various levels of tree retention, depending on constraints such as terrain, riparian zones, and wildlife habitat features. Creek drainages and riparian habitats are outside of the proposed harvest areas and riparian management zones have been established to reduce impacts to riparian flora and fauna and water flow, temperature and turbidity.

Western toad best management practices were established following field studies between 2014 and 2017, which were partially funded by NACFOR, completed by the province and Dulisse Consulting. Subsequently, NACFOR harvested seven small blocks in 2017-2019 in the Summit Lake tenure area. Habitat for western toads remains adequate post-harvest, and toads are regularly observed within the regenerating forests. For more information about these field studies and western toad management, visit the NACFOR website: <https://www.nakuspcommunityforest.com/western-toads/>.

NACFOR is actively engaging with local biologist consultants and government biologists to review harvest plans and the effectiveness of the previously developed best management practices. We are also working with Geotechnical Engineers and Geoscientists, Hydrologists and Visual Impact Specialists to address the many values present on this piece of ground. The conceptual plan for Summit Lake has been made available and openly discussed at NACFOR's open house for the past two years. Additionally, NACFOR is actively sharing information and consulting with all impacted Indigenous groups.

NACFOR holds a Community Forest Agreement with the Province of BC, which mandates NACFOR to harvest a pre-determined volume of timber from a defined land base (tenure) each year. The tenure boundaries limit where NACFOR can harvest. The Community Forest Agreement gives NACFOR the "exclusive right to harvest crown timber and manage the land according to our approved management plan in effect and operational plans approved by government." The Summit Lake tenure area is an



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economically important area for the community forest, containing over 15% of our working forest land base. Additionally, it is not within the scope of the community forest agreement or the rights granted to NACFOR to expand the Summit Lake Provincial Park boundary. This is the responsibility of the Province of BC.

NACFOR's tenure area contains overlapping values such as recreation, wildlife, mushrooms, visuals, and domestic watersheds. NACFOR is committed to responsibly and sustainably managing the community forest tenure for the economic, social, and environmental benefit of the Nakusp and area community.

Boilerplate Summary:

The Nakusp and Area Community Forest (NACFOR) harvesting plans for Summit Lake tenure area have been designed to follow western toad best management practices to reduce impacts, maintain terrestrial habitat, and hibernacula. Harvesting will be completed during the winter months, with frozen ground and a snowpack to reduce impacts, and outside of the western toad migration and breeding season. The planned blocks will be partial cuts with varying levels of tree retention zones, riparian area buffers, and wildlife tree retention. No clearcuts are being proposed. Western toad best management practices were developed in 2015 for harvesting in the Summit Lake area. These practices were informed by field studies conducted at Summit Lake from 2014 – 2017. NACFOR is committed to responsibly and sustainably managing the community forest tenure for the economic, social, and environmental benefit of the Nakusp and area community. For more information about western toad management, visit the NACFOR website: <https://www.nakuspcommunityforest.com/western-toads>.

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